

### Defence reform in Ukraine: chronology of the first five years

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**Anatoliy S. Grytsenko**

## **Verteidigungsreform in der Ukraine: Chronologie der ersten fünf Jahre**

Bericht des BIOst Nr. 29/1998

### **Kurzfassung**

#### *Vorbemerkung*

Als aktiver Partner im 'Programm für Partnerschaft und Frieden' hat die Ukraine sich zur 'Transparenz' in einigen Schlüsselbereichen der zivilen-militärischen Beziehungen und der Verteidigung verpflichtet. Das Land kann seinen Partnern allerdings wenig wertvolle Informationen liefern, da seine militärischen Pläne, Programme und das Finanzierungssystem noch im Anfangsstadium stecken. Außerdem ist die zivile Führung der Ukraine noch nicht bereit, das Militär unter die volle demokratische, zivile Kontrolle zu unterstellen. Dieser Bericht will die verschiedenen Aspekte der Beziehungen zwischen Militär und den zivilen Behörden sowie der Verteidigungsreformen in der Ukraine untersuchen. Hierbei tritt eine wichtige Dimension der Beziehungen zwischen zivilen und militärischen Bereichen in Erscheinung: Parallel zu den Streitkräften existieren einige andere bewaffnete Strukturen und schaffen viele zusätzliche Hindernisse auf dem Weg zum Aufbau von erschwinglichen und nachhaltigen militärischen Strukturen. Diese Studie enthält Faktenmaterial in großem Umfang, wodurch die Entwicklung zwischen 1991 und 1996 gut nachvollzogen werden kann. Trends, Tendenzen und Widersprüche, die auf den ersten Blick nicht ersichtlich sind, können so herausgearbeitet werden. Die Hauptakteure und wichtigsten Persönlichkeiten, die im Planungsprozeß der Verteidigung eine wichtige Rolle spielen, werden vorgestellt. Die Untersuchung basiert auf einer Anzahl offizieller Verlautbarungen und zahlreicher ukrainischer, russischer und westlicher Originalquellen.

#### *Ergebnisse*

1. Es steht noch bei weitem nicht bestens um die Beziehungen zwischen den zivilen und militärischen Bereichen in der Ukraine. Eigentlich ist die zivile Führung noch nicht bereit, das Militär ganz einer demokratischen zivilen Kontrolle zu unterstellen.
2. Der Mangel an konstitutioneller Klarheit, an deutlich festgelegten Prioritäten der Innen- wie Außenpolitik sowie zahllose Brüche in der legislativen Grundlage eröffnen dem Militär einen großen Spielraum zwischen den exekutiven Strukturen und dem Parlament.
3. Das Programm für Aufbau und Entwicklung der Streitkräfte steht im Zentrum der Beziehungen zwischen zivilen und militärischen Behörden der Ukraine. Ohne eine nationale und militärische Verteidigungsstrategie, ohne zivile Vorgaben für die finanziellen Aspekte des

Programms, ohne grundlegende Kenntnis der Ziele und Aufgaben der ukrainischen Streitkräfte, kann ein solches Programm unmöglich erstellt werden.

4. Außerordentlich wichtig ist die Frage des Umfangs des ukrainischen Militärs. Die Ukraine ist in einer sehr viel schwierigeren Lage als andere europäische Länder. Es gibt hier eine Million bewaffneter Truppen, aber nur 370 000 davon dienen in der Armee. Die anderen militärischen Strukturen – die Nationalgarde, die Grenztruppen, die zivilen Verteidigungsformationen, der Sicherheitsdienst, die Truppen des Inneren usw. – haben Ziele und Aufgaben, die sich zum Teil mit denen der Streitkräfte überschneiden. Es wäre also unsinnig, nur die Armee zu reformieren, ohne Ziele und Aufgaben neu zu verteilen und ohne alle staatlichen militärischen Organisationen der Ukraine miteinzubeziehen.
5. Obwohl in den letzten fünf bis sechs Jahren die meisten der notwendigen konstitutionellen und institutionellen Vorbereitungen für eine demokratische zivile Kontrolle über die Streitkräfte in der Ukraine getroffen wurden, so existiert sie gegenwärtig doch nur als Form. Es wäre unbedingt notwendig, die Form mit dem geeigneten Inhalt zu füllen oder, in anderen Worten, ihr 'Leben einzuhauchen'. Nur dann kann man hoffen, daß die Ukraine in den kommenden Jahren in der Lage sein wird, ein wirksames und nachhaltiges System einer verlässlichen demokratisch-zivilen Kontrolle über das Militär aufzubauen.
6. Man kann die Form der Beziehungen zwischen den zivilen und militärischen Behörden mit Inhalt füllen, in dem man wissenschaftlich – oder doch zumindest systematisch – an die Schaffung eines solchen Systems herangeht. Es ist daher von ausschlaggebender Bedeutung für die Ukraine, eine Methodologie für die Reform der Armee zu entwickeln, wenn möglich bis hin zur Ebene der Prüflisten. Nur so kann eine verlässliche demokratische zivile Kontrolle über das Militär errichtet werden.

## Introduction

Ukraine, strategically located in the heartland of the European continent – given its vast territory, population, resources, and its special relations with NATO, with the Russian Federation and with other CIS countries – will play an important role in the future European security architecture.

As an active participant in the NATO 'Partnership for Peace' programme, Ukraine has committed itself to a 'transparency' in some key areas of civil-military relations and defence, such as defence planning, defence budgeting, and weapon systems acquisition. However, the country has little valuable information to share among the partners, because its military planning, programming and budgeting systems are still in their embryonic stage.

This study is devoted to analysing the different aspects of civil-military relations and defence reform in Ukraine. It has few distinct features that differ it from not so vast literature on the subject. First, it looks at the same issue from a slightly different standpoint; that is the effectiveness of the Ukraine's state policy towards the military. Most experts analyse the issue of civilian control over the Armed Forces, mainly, by looking at the military. Moreover, the main question (they often keep in mind) is the loyalty of the Armed Forces to the civilian authorities. As will be demonstrated, the approach used in this study helps the reader to get a deeper understanding of the problems Ukraine is trying to tackle.

Secondly, the study reveals a very important aspect of civil-military relations in Ukraine, that is, in the author's words, the dimensional aspect. It becomes clear for the reader, that in the case of Ukraine one ought to pay much more attention even to the term 'military' as normally used in any other country. Existing in parallel to the Armed Forces a few other armed structures (numbering almost twice as many servicemen) create many additional obstacles on the path of establishing a stable, affordable and sustainable military structure in Ukraine.

Thirdly, the paper contains vast factual material that helps to follow the development of events since 1991. Analysis of the material also allows to single out some trends, tendencies, contradictions, proportions and disproportion, invisible at first sight. In addition, the role of the key players and personalities, involved in the defence planning process, is being revealed.

Finally, the study discusses some general issues regarding the state transformation in Ukraine and regarding the substance of civil-military relations. In this sense, the research stimulates a further study in order to develop a methodological (scientific) approach applicable to the country-in-transition from the post-communist stage to democracy.

The paper contains an introduction, two separate chapters (each in turn subdivided into three sections), and a conclusion.

Chapter 1 The Problem and Its Origins starts with a short historical flashback into 1991-1997, touching upon the post-Soviet legacy that is a starting point for the building of Ukraine's own system of civil-military relations. Different aspects are being studied to understand the peculi-



arity of the situation in Ukraine. One needs to know the patient, his symptoms in order to arrive at a diagnosis and recommend 'a course of treatment.'

The second section continues with an analysis of the aforementioned dimensional aspect of the issue. The author argues, that Ukraine is in a much more difficult situation than other European countries if one considers that it has more than a million armed people and only about 370,000 of them serve in the Armed Forces. Almost twice as many belong to other armed structures, such as the National Guard, the Border Troops, the Civil Defence formations, the Security Service, the Interior Troops, and so forth. Each of these structures has missions and tasks that overlap with those of the Armed Forces. It is impossible (and unwise) to reform just the Armed Forces without the redistribution of missions and tasks and without optimising the whole state military structure in Ukraine. The last part of the chapter is devoted to the 'young' Defence Ministry of Ukraine that fights for its fair 'share of the pie' in a rather competitive environment, being surrounded by other (more powerful) military structures.

Chapter 2 The Failure to Address the Problem provides an analysis of the State programme (for the Armed Forces build-up and development) drafting, review and approval process. It also touches upon issues such as a civilian Defence Minister and the professional Armed Forces in Ukraine.

The programme for the Armed Forces build-up and development has become the focus of civil-military relations in Ukraine. Four consecutive Defence Ministers tried to develop and get it approved. The author believes it is impossible to form it without a clear vision of the national interests, strategic objectives, national and military security strategy without financial and programme guidance from the civilian side; without an understanding of substance of missions and tasks of the Armed Forces. The main message of the piece is that lack of clear guidance and contradictory wording at the top level lead to rather chaotic and unsuccessful attempts at the middle level and in the final analysis – to the prolonged suffering at the bottom level.

In 1994 there was hope, that the appointment of Valeriy Shmarov as a civilian Defence Minister would represent a new state of civil-military relations in Ukraine. It turned out to be a failure. Now Ukraine has already the fourth Defence Minister (for only few years of independent development), not to mention also four chiefs of the General Staff for the same period. Political instability and lack of institutionalised civil service provoke a situation when high and middle level authorities come and go producing no system, no continuity and no results in the long-term. There is an attempt to answer the question, whether the Ukrainian two-year 'experiment' with a civilian Defence Minister was an unreasoned or premature step. The prospect of the professional Armed Forces in Ukraine is under discussion in the last section of the chapter.

The essential message is that Ukraine has the opportunity of obtaining either a successful result, or prolonging the current crisis into the indefinite future with quite predictable consequences. It seems, that some recent positive developments in Ukraine have created a situation

where there is more demand for and more acceptance of logical and reasonable proposals, ideas, and concepts.

Contributions of others to the completion of this study are gratefully acknowledged. I owe my greatest debt to Prof. Peter M.E. Volten, Dr. David Greenwood, and Dr. Joost Herman for their support of the research. I want to express my appreciation to my colleagues from the Centre for European Security Studies, who helped me with the bibliography and made a number of helpful criticisms: Margriet Drent, Theo Postma, Sipke de Hoop, and Janneke Westendorp. I also thank my friends Elena Herman, Sergei Malkin, Leonid Polyakov, and Mykola Sungurovskiy for their valuable suggestions for the improvement of the manuscript. Finally, I thank my wife Liuda for her patience and very active support of my study.

## Chapter 1: The Problem and Its Origins

### *1.1 Soviet Legacy: Starting Point and Humus for the System*

Ukraine was one of the first states of the former Soviet Union to embark on the establishment of its own Armed Forces, paying no attention to talks about the Unified Armed Forces of the CIS. Kiev did not sign the Tashkent Treaty, and Ukrainian leaders are now talking with pride about the fact that Ukrainian servicemen are not being killed in Tajikistan, Chechnya or other places defending foreign interests. It is true. On the other hand, even today, following numerous attempts to reshape and restructure, Ukraine's Armed Forces cannot yet be called the Armed Forces in the full sense of the word. To find true reasons one needs, first, to return back to 1991 and look carefully at the legacy of the Soviet epoch; and secondly, to retrace new developments in Ukraine since 1991. Let us first return to the summer of 1991.<sup>1</sup>

Ukraine inherited a huge Army, although that was not constructed to be the separate Armed Forces of the state. Until 1992, Ukrainian territory was divided among three Soviet Military Districts, totalling about 800,000 military personnel. One of the most powerful Soviet military formations was deployed in Ukraine: the aforesaid three Military Districts, three Air Armies, one Air Defence Army, 43rd Rocket Army, 34 military educational institutions, huge defence industry and the Black Sea Fleet<sup>2</sup> with its enormous coastal infrastructure (although in dual subordination) obtained under Ukrainian jurisdiction. Soviet Armed Forces on Ukrainian territory belonged to the first strategic echelon and were therefore well trained and combat-capable. The total power of the armaments – tanks, armoured personnel carriers,

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<sup>1</sup> Other authors: Oleg Bodruk, Viktor Cherednichenko, Oleg Chornousenko, Charles Dick, John Dunn, Vadim Grechaninov, Taras Kuzio, Stephen Olynky, Grygoriy Perepelytsa, Leonid Polyakov, James Sherr, Mykola Sungurovskiy, in particular – one way or another have already touched upon the issues of civil-military relations and defence reform in Ukraine. It would be enough just to recapitulate here some important points that help to understand the origins of the current problems in the sphere.

<sup>2</sup> In theory, the Black Sea Fleet (BSF) was a large and formidable force. In 1991 it comprised 45 combat vessels and 246 support vessels; 28 diesel-powered submarines; naval aviation support; a naval infantry brigade; a motorised rifle division; and more than 50,000 navy personnel. Despite its size and strength, the BSF combat capabilities were rather limited.

artillery systems, intercontinental ballistic missiles, strategic bombers, combat aircraft and helicopters – was rated as third in the world after the USA and the Russian Federation.

Soviet Army grouping had a clear sense of mission and a high degree of internal cohesion although within the overall structure directed from Moscow. It was a large and effective force more oriented towards large scale offensive operations outside Ukrainian territory. At the beginning of 1992 it was pulled out of the relatively well-functioning (Soviet) military system with all further consequences.

In the 'Declaration of State Sovereignty' Ukraine proclaimed its intention to become a non-nuclear state. In subsequent CIS agreements it reiterated this policy and soon began to transfer its tactical nuclear weapons to the Russian Federation for destruction. Already, in July 1992, all tactical nuclear warheads were transferred. After some zigzag moves Ukraine became a party of the Lisbon Protocol and of SALT-1 Treaty. In January 1994, the trilateral meeting in Moscow of the Presidents of Ukraine, the Russian Federation and the United States, finally closed the nuclear page in Ukrainian history. Therefore, the future development of the Ukrainian Armed Forces would have to be based on conventional weapon systems.

According to the international agreements, conventional weapons also had to undergo cut-backs to the agreed levels. For Ukraine, these levels are 4,080 tanks, 5,050 armoured personnel carriers, 4,040 artillery systems of calibre over 100 mm, 1,090 combat aircraft and 330 strike helicopters. Ukraine had already fulfilled its commitments by 1995, ahead of the agreed time. The aforementioned ceilings are high enough to allow the building of national Armed Forces. However, one must consider that the capabilities which Ukraine inherited decrease every year due to physical wearing out and technological backwardness of weapon systems.

The Soviet institutional control consisted simply of Communist Party control (directly and through special services) at every level of the Armed Forces. This control was neither democratic, nor truly civilian. But it was real, well institutionalised, and very effective within the overall totalitarian state structure. Every military unit down to company level had its deputy commander for political affairs. In fact, professional advancement depended on political loyalty. Therefore, most officers and certainly almost all senior officers were members of the Communist Party. The break-up of the Soviet Union brought about the end of the old system of political control over the military. In addition, if one considers the lack of other elements of reliable, democratic civilian control (such as President, Parliamentary Defence Committee, Defence Ministry, other defence-related governmental structures, free media, academia, NGO, etc.) in the Ukrainian 'state' of the Soviet period, clearly, Ukraine had to start almost from scratch.

Together with a huge Army Ukraine inherited a wide range of difficult problems: dedovshchina (recruit hazing) and corruption; poor living conditions of officers and their families; poor motivation; violation of military discipline; draft evasion and so forth. In addition, record numbers of officers requested discharges from service, while more than 100,000 others were waiting in line for transfer to Ukraine from the other former Soviet republics.

To conclude, in 1991 Ukraine faced an extremely difficult task – firstly, to forge a national Armed Force out of chaotic and hypertrophied troops stationed on its territory; secondly, it had no established state institutions, no people neither militaries, nor civilians – capable of running the Armed Forces on their own; thirdly, no military industry capable of producing weaponry autonomously and no non-governmental 'component' of civilian control; in short, having almost nothing, but problems.

### *1.2 System's Dimension: Army or Armies of Ukraine?*

Ukraine is in a much more difficult situation than that of other countries if one considers that it has more than a million armed people and only about 370,000 of them serve in the Armed Forces.<sup>3</sup> Almost twice as many belong to other state institutions – the so called armed structures or power structures.

Since 1991 a variety of militarised organisations have been created. Apart from those subordinated to the Defence Ministry, i.e. the Ground Forces, the Air and Air Defence Forces and the Navy, there are also the Border Troops, the Interior Troops, the Ministry of Internal Affairs troops, the National Guard units, the Security Service sub-units, the Civil Defence formations,<sup>4</sup> the State Guard Service sub-units, the Tax Police and Custom Service sub-units, the State Communications Department sub-units, the Ukrainian National Space Agency units and other forces belonging to different ministries and agencies.<sup>5</sup>

According to Major General Vilen Martyrosyan, further militarisation of Ukrainian society continues; a most powerful system of enforcement ministries and departments has been created. At present there is one person in uniform per 25 taxpayers in Ukraine.<sup>6</sup> Besides militarisation, other aspects (including the economic one) are very important, since the aforesaid forces can carry out various kinds of military tasks and to a certain extent they duplicate functions of the regular Armed Forces. In fact, step by step, high-cost and unpromising structures are being solidly ensconced and brought about behind a screen of concern for the future welfare of the country (and the Army).

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<sup>3</sup> On 1 January 1997 the Armed Forces of Ukraine numbered 370,847 of the military personnel. For more data see, S. Zgurets, 'Want Peace – Be Prepared for War,' Kiev DEN' in Ukrainian, 30 July 1997, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup> In 1996 the Civil Defence formations were re-subordinated to the newly established Ministry of Emergency of Ukraine.

<sup>5</sup> The notion of the 'State Military Organisation' as an umbrella for all these armed structures appears in Chapter 5 of the 'National Security Concept of Ukraine' adopted by the Parliament on 16 January 1997. The author of the paper, working as an MOD representative in the Parliamentary Defence Committee, presented the draft Chapter on behalf of his colleagues from the Military Security & Defence Studies Division. In fact, it was the first time this notion appeared in an official document of the Parliament.

<sup>6</sup> Maj-Gen V. Martyrosyan, 'What Kind of Minister Do We Need: In Uniform or Not?,' VECHIRNIY KYIV in Ukrainian, 17 June 1994, p. 2. This article was written a few years ago. Since then the situation has got even worse.

One could cite the National Guard of Ukraine as an example. This was established according to the law in November 1991<sup>7</sup> on the basis of Interior Ministry troops. Later, a number of units and elements of the Armed Forces were incorporated into the National Guard. Now they number more than 30,000 servicemen<sup>8</sup> in regular military units, special designation units and army aviation. The National Guard is an independent military formation, subordinated to the President. Analysis of the legislative documents<sup>9</sup> shows that the National Guard's missions and tasks overlap with those of the Armed Forces, as well as with missions and tasks of the Internal Troops. Needless to say, contemporary Ukrainian leadership has the Ukrainian Armed Forces and other armed structures at its command.

Speaking on prospects for further development of the National Guard, its Commander Lieutenant General Ihor Valkiv said that the National Guard is moving towards integration of small separate sub-units into big military units.<sup>10</sup> According to the General, these units are being enlarged, due to turning over to the National Guard of components which previously belonged to the Defence Ministry. Thus, only in 1996, did the National Guard take over the military units in Donetsk, Simferopol, Kerch and Pavlograd regions.

The National Guard is equipped with tanks, armoured personnel carriers, anti-tank and air defence artillery systems, combat and transport helicopters. In 1996, the 4th marine brigade (which previously belonged to the Ukrainian Naval Forces) stationed in Crimea, was turned over to the National Guard. As well as other armed structures, the National Guard has created its own sub-systems (or at least some of their elements) to provide logistics, military education and training, communications, command and control, intelligence, etc. For example, despite earlier approved plans to use the Defence Ministry's military institutes, officers for the National Guard are being trained at Kharkiv-based National Guard Institute.

A similar picture is seen in other power structures of Ukraine. The Border Troops,<sup>11</sup> for instance, have their own Naval Forces with two-star Admiral in charge, own air and air defence components, own military academy, own command and control system based on three Border Districts,<sup>12</sup> and so forth. Few attempts (to try) to unify the armed structures' approaches and

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<sup>7</sup> It was a very uncertain time, when the Soviet Army (subordinated to Moscow) was still on Ukrainian territory, and Ukrainian leadership had no military forces at its disposal.

<sup>8</sup> Zgurets, 'Want Peace .., Kiev DEN,' p. 4. According to the data presented, on 1 January 1997 the National Guard had 31,297 people.

<sup>9</sup> Colonel A. Grytsenko and Colonel (Retired) A. Gavrylov, *Overlapping Missions and Military Tasks of the Ukrainian Armed Structures*, the General Staff Research Centre, unpublished paper in Ukrainian, December 1996, 16 p.

<sup>10</sup> Ukraine: National Guard Prepared To Defend Sensitive Installations, Moscow INTERFAX in English, 1411 GMT, 4 November 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-215.

<sup>11</sup> On 1 January 1997 the Border Troops numbered 36,175 people. For more details see: S. Zgurets, *Want Peace – Be Prepared for War*, Kiev DEN' in Ukrainian, 30 July 1997, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> When the Armed Forces left only two (out of three) Military Districts, the leadership of the Border Troops decided to rename their own (still) three Border Districts into the Operational Directions. The feeling was that it could be 'unfair' for the smaller military formation to have more districts than much bigger Armed Forces have. In fact, nothing was changed; and still the Commander of the Operational Direction in the Border Troops is a three-star general.

needs – in order to optimise the state military organisation and to minimise the resources required have so far proven to be fruitless. Frankly speaking, these attempts have not been persistent enough, and have mainly originated from the bottom.

Volodymyr Mukhyn, Chairman of the Parliamentary Defence and State Security Committee shares his doubts on the state's ability to finance reforms simultaneously in different armed structures:

It is envisaged that the (1997) budget of our Armed Forces will amount to H1.5 billion.<sup>13</sup> This is worrying, because the earmarked sum is even lower than last year's... The situation in the Security Service is no better... The Border Troops have ended up without equipment, fuel, and transport means as well.<sup>14</sup>

Ukraine's north-eastern neighbour is probably the only other country faced with the similar problem of the mushrooming of numerous armed structures. According to former Russian Defence Minister Igor Rodyonov:

...practically few parallel armies have been created (in the Russian Federation), with their own command structures, with their own military academies and research institutions, with their own logistics and acquisition structures. And all of them require resources and means, dispersing and depreciating financial resources allotted for defence.<sup>15</sup>

Sounds very familiar, does it not? The situations in both countries have exactly the same roots.

It is impossible and unwise to reform just the Armed Forces without the redistribution of missions and tasks and without optimising the whole state military organisation. Given the resource deficit, Ukraine is doomed to apply (at least once) the so called 'top-down' approach if it wants to create a stable, reasonable system that could function within the established resource limits. Some statements of the top-level MOD officials sound rather promising in this sense:

The main thing is that reform of the Armed Forces is a component of the overall military reform, and it cannot be carried out separately. During the five years of Ukraine's independence the Armed Forces have been reformed, but military reform in the state has not been conducted.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Since September 1996, the new Ukrainian currency hryvnya.

<sup>14</sup> V. Mukhyn, 'The Armed Forces Do Not Only Consume, They Can Produce as Well,' HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian, 12 November 1996, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> O. Falynev, 'Reforms in Armed Forces Have No Alternative,' KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian, 6 September 1996, p. 1.

<sup>16</sup> Lieutenant General O. Kuzmuk, 'Currently No One in the World May Say That Aggression Against His Country is Not Possible,' KYIVSKA PRAVDA in Ukrainian, 31 October 1996, p. 1.

Unfortunately, real steps give ground for quite a different conclusion: there is no clear understanding on the part of the Ukrainian government that the country needs not just the reform of the Armed Forces, but the State military reform on the whole.<sup>17</sup>

There is one more important aspect of this issue. Most foreign authors who write on civil-military relations and military reform in Ukraine underestimate the importance of the aforesaid dimensional aspect. To reflect the existence of numerous military establishments next to the Armed Forces, in the case of Ukraine one ought to redefine even the vocabulary. At least such notions as military budget, military planning, military establishment, civil-military relations, and military expenditures must take into account all the aforementioned armed structures. In the case of Ukraine there is a real difference between these terms and those normally used by foreign experts: 'synonymous' notions, such as: military (defence) budget, military (defence) planning, military (defence) establishment, military (defence) expenditures, and so forth. If one wants to get into the substance and indeed into the origins of current Ukrainian problems of civil-military relations, he must apply a much wider approach to the military sphere.

### ***1.3 System's Element: MOD as the Youngest Stepchild***

One of the biggest challenges facing the Ukrainian military is the immaturity of the Armed Forces and the Defence Ministry as state institutions in comparison with other armed structures whose existence originate in the Soviet epoch.

In every country, the war office holds a leading place in the hierarchy of power ministries. Things are somewhat different in Ukraine. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service of Ukraine existed under different names and grew along with other structures. Naturally, over these past few years, their authority grew and they have become part of the state mechanism. Whereas the Ministry of Defence is a structure that did not exist at the level of republic: during the Soviet period, Ukraine, by law, did not have its own Armed Forces. They have been in existence only since 1992 and now they are experiencing the greatest difficulties.

Everyone – from an ordinary functionary to the Cabinet of Ministers – understands that the Ministry of Defence is still child requiring nurturing and help. Nevertheless, 'rival' organisations to the Armed Forces are being strengthened, notably the Interior forces, the Security Service, the National Guard and the Border troops. The National Guard, for instance, has been booming because of a stake of the highest leadership in it. Since 1991, the Border Troops have become a sort of symbol of sovereignty that faces threats and challenges (although usually of a non-military nature) on a daily basis. Given the difficulties and instability of the transition period, the Security Service and the Interior Troops have always something (or somebody) to fight against, whereas the Armed Forces face no real enemy right now. In fact, an interesting viewpoint was presented by Dmytriy Vydrin, Director of International Institute of Global and Regional Security:

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<sup>17</sup> Related issues were discussed on 13 October 1996 in Kiev during the seminar conducted by the Centre for European Security Studies. The material was presented in a report: O. Vachayev, 'Do Not Disregard Somebody Else's Experience,' NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 15 October 1996, p. 2.

Today, unfortunately, Ukraine has no enemies or friends. Why do I say 'unfortunately?' Because enemies and friends emerge in the presence of clearly defined national interests, which either coincide or conflict with someone else's interests. A vague policy in the ordering of priorities and the pursuit of national interests, unfortunately, precludes the emergence of strong friends and of powerful adversaries.<sup>18</sup>

One should not look for enemies or (let alone) create them in order to attract the leadership's attention to the problems of the Armed Forces. It is also quite obvious, that the leadership needs to define for what purpose it maintains the Army, in both terms of missions and tasks. The definition should be less vague, less politicised and its wording must contain something meaningful for military planners. The dimensional aspect seems to be very important for Ukraine not only today, but also in the near future. One can easily foresee artificial obstacles on the way to a reasonable balancing of existing power structures, of redistribution of missions, tasks and finances accordingly. Those obstacles are political, corporate and personal in nature. On the other hand, the current situation cannot last forever. One would support Volodymyr Shevchenko, member of the Parliamentary Defence Committee, who said: "The Army cannot be an arena of endless restructuring, as is presently the case."<sup>19</sup> Sooner or later, Ukraine must start a full-dimensional military reform, not only imitation of reforms in the Armed Forces alone. Hopefully, it will happen sooner rather than later.

## Chapter 2: The Failure to Address the Problem

### 2.1 *Programme of Reforms: Vehicle for the System*

'Plans remain meaningless piles of paper unless requirements and resources match.'  
(John M. Collins)

The programme for the Armed Forces build-up and development has become the focus of civil-military relations in Ukraine. Development of the programme is envisaged by Article 8 of the Law 'On Defence of Ukraine'.<sup>20</sup> The Defence Ministry is responsible for its drafting. Since 1992 there have been four attempts to develop and get the programme approved. Each of four Defence Ministers has tried. Despite the assertions of the current Chief of the General Staff, experts believe, even today that there is no 'light at the end of tunnel' yet.

The nature and extent of the transformation that must be carried out in the military sphere made it possible to discuss not only reform in the Army as such, but rather the full-scale build-up of an absolutely new Armed Forces. Unfortunately, there was not enough discussion at the appropriate level required to ensure the success of such a huge task. Generally speaking:

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<sup>18</sup> D. Vydrin, 'Today Ukraine Has No Particular Friends Or Particular Enemies, and That Is Not Good,' NEZAVISIMOST in Russian, 12 July 1995, p. 7.

<sup>19</sup> Lieutenant Colonel V. Shevchenko, 'The Army Adapts to the Needs of Defence,' HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian, 5 March 1996, p. 8.

<sup>20</sup> Law of Ukraine 'On Defence of Ukraine,' Collected documents 'Military Legislation in Ukraine and Law' in Ukrainian, VARTA Press (Kiev 1994) p. 28.



the concept of reform (in contrast to other kinds of social change, revolution, coup, or piece-meal social tinkering, for example) connotes a change for the better by means of a deliberate, orderly, gradual and systematic process which presupposes the existence of stable, cohesive and integrated structures.<sup>21</sup>

The Ukrainian Armed Forces 'plainly fail to present a coherent, unified whole and also lack the stability and cohesion which would enable them to be considered as a candidate for wholesale reform.'<sup>22</sup> Thus, instead of reforming one ought to talk about the building up and development of the Armed Forces in Ukraine.

The problem of building up the Armed Forces has remained topical for Ukraine over the entire period of its independent development. All researchers, by and large, emphasise two reasons for the slowdown in the progress of military organisational development in Ukraine: first, lack of a clear-cut and scientifically substantiated conceptual framework and, second, inadequate financing (directly for the reforming) of the Armed Forces. Obviously, there is one more reason lack of vision on both military and civilian sides and therefore lack of the necessary guidance through the most important stages of the defence planning process. Given the lack of clear (if any) guidance, it is rather unfair to criticise too harshly the General Staff's inability to reform the Armed Forces. It is also true, however, that the General Staff has been unable to provide the necessary inspiration and leadership.

This study addresses some of the specific features of military development that have taken shape in Ukraine, and that have both domestic and foreign aspects. This chapter offers the reader to return to the recent history, touch upon the programme's substance, the key players and the leadership involved, and upon the procedures and legislative framework, emerging from this rather chaotic process.

### *2.1.1 Contradictory Wording at the Top Level*

As early as July 1994 President Kravchuk was quite certain: "We have a programme for building the Armed Forces till the year 2010."<sup>23</sup> By contrast, in November of the same year, the optimism of the leadership appears to have faded away. The newly elected President Kuchma admitted: "so far Ukraine had no clear Military Doctrine and comprehensive programme for the development of the Armed Forces. We should review the whole strategy with regard to the Army."<sup>24</sup>

In April 1996, after a year and a half in office, President Kuchma grew more optimistic:

A state programme has practically been drawn up to build and develop Ukraine's Armed Forces. The main aim of the military reform is to create a battle-worthy Army, capable of ful-

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<sup>21</sup> T. Waters, Military Reform or Military Disintegration in the Commonwealth, Conference proceedings, RAF Staff College, Bracknell, 23-24 April 1992, p. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. p. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Ukraine: President Kravchuk Pledges Further Social Guarantees to Kiev Troops, Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian, 1500 GMT, 7 July 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-131.

<sup>24</sup> President Kuchma Notes Need for Strong Military, Moscow ITAR-TASS in English, 1454 GMT, 14 November 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-220.

filling the tasks of defending the country and not being an excessive burden to it. Taking this into account, the structure is to be optimised, the strength of the Armed Forces worked out, and measures taken to strengthen civilian control and military personnel policies in the Army and other military formations in Ukraine.<sup>25</sup>

It is arguable whether one could speak about the existence of 'a practically' developed programme, if the structure is yet to be optimised, if the strength is yet to be worked out and the measures are yet to be taken; and all this must be applied not only to the Armed Forces, but to the other military formations of Ukraine as well. In December 1996 President Kuchma became visibly nervous. Evaluating the MOD-led process of the programme development, he said: "It is not a work. It is the worst version of its imitation ... Today we can only speak in future tense about the state programme for build-up and development of the Armed Forces."<sup>26</sup>

Following their superiors (the Presidents), month after month, year after year the Defence Ministers, in their turn, proclaimed conflicting objectives in terms of military personnel ceilings, force structure, not to mention lack of clear vision and understanding of the reform's substance on the whole. Let us compare only two quotations of Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov:

The numerical strength should gradually be brought to the level determined by our Doctrine and the Concept of Defence and Build-up of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.<sup>27</sup>

By the end of 1995 we are planning to have a 400,000 - strong Army. This figure has been found to be economically feasible.<sup>28</sup>

It is necessary to give several brief comments on these statements. Firstly, Ukrainian Military Doctrine does not specify the level up to which 'the numerical strength should be gradually brought.' Secondly, the aforementioned Concept of Defence and Build-up of the Ukrainian Armed Forces does specify the level. According to the document, personnel ceiling must be established on the level of 0.8-0.9% of the Ukrainian population, that means 400,000-420,000 people. The 'only' contradiction is, that this 0.8-0.9% ceiling was established not only for the Armed Forces, but also for the Border Troops, the National Guard and the Civil Defence formations on the whole. Thirdly, the second statement of the Minister leaves no doubt that (in contradiction with the letter of the Concept) he envisages 400,000 militaries just for the Armed Forces under his authority. Finally, nobody will ever find out who was such a smart

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<sup>25</sup> Ukraine: President Kuchma Delivers Annual Address to the Parliament, Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian, 1815 GMT, 2 April 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-067.

<sup>26</sup> L. Kuchma, 'Ukraine Does Not Need Funny Armed Forces, It Needs of Full Value Army' URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian, 17 December 1996, p. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Report on Defence Minister's News Conference, Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian, 1915 GMT 26 August 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-167.

<sup>28</sup> Interview with Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov: What Does Valeriy Shmarov, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister, Think About Most Often. – Kharkiv VREMYA in Russian, 29 June 1995, p. 2, FBIS-SOV-95-139.

expert in economics (in the MOD or somewhere else) to justify for Minister Shmarov that "400,000 ... figure has been found to be economically feasible."<sup>29</sup>

### *2.1.2 Unsuccessful Attempts at the Middle Level*

"If you don't know what to do, you can't plan how to do it." (John M. Collins)

There were several attempts made to form a programme for the build-up and development of the Armed Forces, though these were unsuccessful. In 1992-1993 mainly urgent and rather obvious measures were undertaken to reshape and restructure the former Soviet military grouping.<sup>30</sup> On the whole, there was no regular work carried out on the programme, although there were numerous poorly co-ordinated attempts to create it in parts (research, education and training, acquisition, logistics, and other spheres of military activities).

In order to promote the 'second breathing' and better co-ordination of the process, President Kuchma undertook some concrete steps. On 2 December 1994, during the MOD Board meeting, he authorised the preparation of two state programmes envisaged by the Law 'On Defence of Ukraine:' the State programme for the build-up and development of the Armed Forces, and the State programme for the development of armaments and military equipment. On 2 February 1995, the National Security Council under the President of Ukraine, approved the resolution 'On Strategic Decision for Employment of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Accordance with Current Military-political Situation and Economic Capabilities of the State.'<sup>31</sup> The President also authorised the Cabinet of Ministers and the Ministry of Defence to develop and submit for his approval the drafts of the aforementioned state programmes. Already in 1994, the authority to co-ordinate the work was given to the newly established (General Staff) Directorate for the Build-up and Development of the Armed Forces, headed by Major General Dmytro Umanets. Moreover, in 1995, when relations between the Defence Minister and the Chief of the General Staff deteriorated, the Directorate was re-subordinated directly to Minister Shmarov. Unfortunately, the Directorate had not produced any sound result.

A year later, the state leaders became eye-witnesses to the fact that nothing had been achieved by the Ministry of Defence. Only the contradictions between Minister Shmarov and his Chief of the General Staff Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata (regarding the main directions for reforming the Armed Forces) had become much stronger.

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<sup>29</sup> Some foreign experts and observers try to draw certain conclusions and single trends and tendencies out of this kind of statement.

<sup>30</sup> The military leaders have re-arranged the existing three Military Districts, leaving only two of them (Odessa and Carpathian) and creating the MOD and the Armed Forces' Main Staff Headquarters on the base of Kiev Military District Headquarters. Other obvious steps were also made: first, structures that were supposed to support other Soviet military groupings were liquidated; second, operational formations (the Field Armies) were transformed into operational-tactical formations (the Army corps).

<sup>31</sup> Ukrainian Armed Forces: Current State and Problems of Reforming, Report of Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Research in Ukrainian (Kiev 1996), p. 8.

For the second attempt the MOD had drafted the 'State Program for the Build-up and Development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine for 1995-2010.' The ultimate aim of the programme – as it was declared by General Umanets – was a new model of the Armed Forces. It was envisaged that they were to be numerically small, well armed and supplied with regard for the defence needs and economic capabilities of the state. However, the wording was not convincing. Closer study of the draft showed that it was a simply unbalanced 'list of wishes with no serious substantiation attached to it. Evaluating the draft, Lieutenant General Ihnatenko, MP and former Head of the MOD Main Personnel Directorate expressed his doubts:

The Ukrainian Army requires not casual and partial reforms, but rather full, consistent and systematic remaking. This process is difficult, and does not tolerate excessive haste. The first bricks in this structure should at the same time be laid solidly and without error.<sup>32</sup>

The General believed that the military can achieve such the objective only with the aid of the Government and the Parliament. In his view, "only independent representatives of people, supported by public opinion of the entire country, can help to clear away the obstacles on the way to the creation of Ukrainian Armed Forces."<sup>33</sup>

On 28 November 1995, an expanded meeting of the MOD Board was held with the participation of President Leonid Kuchma, Supreme Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces; Chairman of the Parliament Oleksandr Moroz; and Prime Minister Yevhen Marchuk. Heads of ministries and department, directly associated with the defence sphere also took part in the meeting. The meeting outlined the trends of the further development and reforms in the Army.

In his report, Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov analysed the course of military building, its positive aspects and the shortcomings. The head of the MOD specified some urgent tasks, upon the fulfilment of which, combat readiness of the Armed Forces and the prospects of their development depended. President Kuchma stressed that building of the Armed Forces is one of the main factors in the state building. He also underscored that "it is only in case of proper attention to the Army on the part of all state institutions that we will be able to change the situation for the better and create up-to-date Armed Forces."<sup>34</sup> He authorised the Cabinet of Ministers to take under its control the fulfilment of the President's directives on the building of the Armed Forces.

The President was forced to ascertain that his tasks were not fulfilled. Moreover, he evaluated the state of reform in the Defence Ministry as absolutely unsatisfactory and instructed the Ministry to develop a plan of urgent measures.

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<sup>32</sup> Lieutenant General O. Ihnatenko, 'What the Army of Ukraine Will Be: The Necessity of Military Reform,' Kiev NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 10 August 1995, p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Kuchma, Moroz, Marchuk, Shmarov Discuss Army Issues: The State Needs Up-to-date Armed Forces, Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian, 30 November 1995, p. 1.

### 2.1.3 'Detective' Stories

Further development (in drafting the programme) was progressing almost according to a scenario of a classical detective story. It was under a veil of secrecy, even the military leadership at the very top was unaware of the process, let alone providing input or co-ordination. Instead of General Umanets and his Directorate, a new team of about five General Staff officers with Major General Mykola Palchuk (then Chief of Staff of Main Army Directorate of the General Staff) took responsibility for the process. Unfortunately, they were also working mainly on their own, without clear guidance from the MOD leadership, not to mention lack of any meaningful input from other state structures.

On 6 January 1996, Presidium of the National Security Council, under the President, approved the draft submitted by Minister Shmarov. The approval was rather conditional: they approved the Concept, i.e. the main directions of defence reform. In compliance with the Concept, the MOD had to form an appropriate programme. On 25 January 1996, the MOD Board considered the draft in turn of the 'state' programme for the build-up and development of the Armed Forces, which was actually prepared in the Ministry itself again without any involvement of the other state institutions. The story got quite an interesting turn on 3 February 1996 at the conference, addressing the problems the Ukrainian Armed Forces faced with regard to its build-up:

A staff has been established – with (Defence Minister) Valeriy Shmarov's consent – in the MOD and its operations are practically illegal. Hiding in Pushcha Vodytsa (suburbs of Kiev), its officers have drafted a programme for profound Army reform, keeping it secret even from the Chief of the General Staff.<sup>35</sup>

This is what Major General Leonid Kravchuk,<sup>36</sup> First Deputy Commandant of the Ukrainian Armed Forces Academy, reported. Leonid Kravchuk claimed that General Lopata, Chief of the General Staff, 'declassified' this information when he delivered a report to the Academy instructors on 2 February 1996. According to General Kravchuk:

the 'secret' plan envisages the abolishment of the two remaining Military Districts. This measure can also be interpreted as the first step toward the ruining of the state defence system which was created with such great effort over the past four years. Defence Ministry Main Departments' chiefs were given a short deadline to look through the draft prepared by a secret staff and then ordered to sign it. A refusal to sign the document could lead to most serious sanctions. Regrettably, there were quite a number of generals who were ready to sign any document to preserve their privileges and benefits.<sup>37</sup>

In the presence of Ukrainian MPs and Defence Ministry representatives, General Kravchuk said that he considered the establishment of an illegal structure within the power ministry as

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<sup>35</sup> Report from the conference by Klyuchikov, Hennadiy: Major General Leonid Kravchuk Revealed a 'Clan-destine' Staff Within the Defence Ministry, Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 6 February 1996, p. 1.

<sup>36</sup> Do not get confused: he is [only] a namesake of the former Ukrainian President.

<sup>37</sup> Report from the conference by H. Klyuchikov, Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 6 February 1996, p. 3.

an attempt by a military coup to fully destroy the state defence system and then abolish the sovereignty of the state. He called upon the entire officer corps to force the Defence Ministry Board, by all means available, to resign because of an attempt to undermine the defence potential of the state; because of the unsatisfactory combat readiness of the Army and the inability to concert efforts around the priority defence tasks.

In his turn, Colonel General Ivan Bizhan, First Deputy Defence Minister was not inclined to overdramatise the situation in the MOD. He confirmed that on 26 November 1995, he was instructed (by order of Minister Shmarov) to set up and head a Working Group that would draft proposals for the Armed Forces' build-up programme. All Main Departments' chiefs were involved to some extent in preparing the programme draft. According to General Bizhan, the programme draft had been discussed at the Defence Ministry Board and at the meeting of the Defence Council.<sup>38</sup>

It was the immediate changes in the Armed Forces that became the primary issue at that conference. According to the plans of its organisers, the forum had to become the first open and decisive attack by the generals and officers who did not approve the officially pursued course of the military reform. Therefore, a massive support group of Ukrainian MPs was brought in to participate in the conference. The top-level of the Defence Ministry was invited to play the role of 'whipping boys,' but they did not accept this challenge.

Ten days later, Minister Shmarov explained that "a programme for reforming the Armed Forces which had been drafted until the year 2010 will become valid soon. The programme had already been discussed by the Government, the President, and the National Security Council. At the moment the programme is being redrafted and supplemented."<sup>39</sup> One week later, Colonel Oleksandr Kluban, press secretary to Minister Shmarov, clarified some plans on reforming the Armed Forces. According to him, there was practically nothing done to reform the Armed Forces for the last four years. Therefore, the Defence Ministry Board has developed a Concept for the reform of the Ukrainian Army. It envisages:

first of all, changes in the management of the Armed Forces. The objective will be reached by means of the establishment of seven Operational-territorial Commands – instead of two Military Districts – based on seven Army corps.<sup>40</sup>

Some experts expressed their concern that the creation of Operational-territorial Commands (with their autonomous logistics systems) could generate the federalisation of the Armed Forces and would lead to the establishment of several regional armies. However, the authors of that programme, General Bizhan among others, ruled this out. Colonel Kluban said, that not only Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov, but also the National Security Council had

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> I. Kovtonyuk, 'Due to the 'Conditional' Training of Ukrainian Troops, It Is Difficult To Form Even a Tank Battalion of Peacekeepers,' Kiev UKRAYINA MOLODA in Ukrainian, 16 February 1996, p. 3.

<sup>40</sup> Report from the news conference by Y. Borutskiy, Lviv VYSOKYY ZAMOK in Ukrainian, 22 February 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-042.

already supported this proposal.<sup>41</sup> Two days later there was another interesting announcement:

Negative estimation of the military reform state was confirmed by Deputy Defence Minister Ivan Bizhan at a regular briefing in the MOD. He declared that the Ministry of Defence has made mistakes in taking principal decisions concerning the creation and re-stationing of some units, and developing the programme of the military education reform.<sup>42</sup>

It is understandable, that all the 'mistakes' General Bizhan was talking about received the blessing of the Defence Minister as the Head of the MOD. It is also obvious, that the 'Ministry of Defence' is quite a big institution, within which there is always 'somebody' who prepares (proposes) decisions for the Minister's final approval. Let us become acquainted with a chronological account that will help to clarify the origins of the 'mistakes' only in the field 'of military education reform.'

- In 1992 the Minister of Defence (Kostyantyn Morozov) signed Directive No. 133. According to Directive No. 133, all military educational institutions (more than 100,000 militaries and almost 100,000 civilians) were re-subordinated from the military services to the MOD Main Military Education Directorate.
- In 1994 the Minister of Defence (Vitaliy Radetskyy) signed Directive No. 164. According to Directive No. 164, the military educational institutions were re-subordinated back to the military services.
- In 1996 the Minister of Defence (Valeriy Shmarov) signed Directive No. 98. According to Directive No. 98, the military educational institutions were re-subordinated once again from the military services to the MOD Main Military Education Directorate.
- In 1997 the Minister of Defence (Olexandr Kuzmuk) signed Directive No. 47. According to Directive No. 47, the military educational institutions were re-subordinated once more to the military services.

All the aforementioned directives "introducing both centralised and decentralised systems are" (of course) – aimed at optimising the structure, improving the management, reducing the overhead costs and so forth.

It is not difficult to take notice of the regularity: the Ministers (No. 1) Morozov and (No. 3) Shmarov, saw the optimum in a centralised system, and the Ministers (No. 2) Radetskyy and (No. 4) Kuzmuk preferred a decentralised one. There is only one invisible continuity in this conflicting zigzag process. This is Colonel General Ivan Bizhan, First Deputy Defence Minister, who, since 1992, has been the highest ranking MOD official, responsible for military education under all of the aforementioned Defence Ministers. It was under his co-ordination that

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Problems of the Armed Forces and the Military-Industrial Complex of Ukraine and Civilian Control over Their Activities, Report of Ukrainian Centre for Peace, Conversion and Conflict Resolution Studies (Kiev 1996), p. 3. The same idea (expressed by General Bizhan) is to be found in Lieutenant Colonel S. Chornous, 'The Reforms Are Dictated by Life,' Kiev NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 24 February 1996, p. 1.

all four directives were drafted. Is it not interesting that it is General Bizhan himself who "declared that the Ministry of Defence has made mistakes in taking principal decisions concerning the creation and re-stationing of some units and developing the programme of military education reform?" How can one disagree with John Collins who said: "No (defence planning) system is any better than people who shape and operate it."<sup>43</sup>

#### *2.1.4 Sometimes New Is Rather Forgotten Old, and Is Not Necessarily Better*

In February 1996, President Kuchma relieved Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata, Chief of Staff of the Ukrainian Armed Forces from his post. The decision caused a great fuss among Ukrainian politicians. As the second most important personality in the MOD, General Lopata had traditionally been considered a bulwark of the Ukraine's military-industrial complex and an advocate of the (Soviet model) Military Districts system. According to the official wording, the Chief of the General Staff was fired, because he exceeded his authority by putting to public judgement something that is a state secret;<sup>44</sup> in military vocabulary labelled as 'insubordination.'

The debate about the dismissal of General Lopata hit the news headlines for a while. On the one hand, there were five high ranking General Staff officers who, reportedly,<sup>45</sup> submitted their resignation to express support for their former chief. On the other hand, certain reports announced that all of Lopata's supporters would be dismissed, because they refused to sign the programme draft prepared by the aforesaid 'secret staff.' Colonel Oleksandr Kluban, the press secretary of Minister Shmarov, assured that:

Lieutenant General Hennadyi Huryn, Lieutenant General Heorhyy Pankratov, and Major General Anatoliy Yarovyy remain in their posts. As regards Lieutenant General Anatoliy Korkyshko and Colonel Petro Korotchenko, who are in pension age and have not changed their way of thinking, they have been retired.<sup>46</sup>

Despite the assertion, all three aforementioned generals were very soon released from their duties.

In February 1996 President Kuchma appointed new Chief of the General Staff – Lieutenant General Oleksandr Zatynayko, one of the Army corps commanders. Interestingly enough, it was General Zatynayko who became responsible for the implementation of the programme, while it was originally designed by ... General Bizhan. However, when asked to give his opinion on the document in March 1996 (when Minister Shmarov was still in charge), General Zatynayko replied:

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<sup>43</sup> J.M. Collins, U.S. Defence Planning (Westview Press, Boulder 1982), p. 9.

<sup>44</sup> This 'something' was his different approach to the building of the Armed Forces. In general, it had nothing to do with 'a state secret.' It was rather an issue of absolutely inappropriate form chosen by the highest ranking military officer to put 'to public judgment' his disagreement with his civilian superior.

<sup>45</sup> Ukraine: Top Brass Reportedly Resign Over General Lopata Dismissal, Moscow NTV in Russian, 1900 GMT 17 February 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-034.

<sup>46</sup> Report from the news conference by Y. Borutskiy, Lviv VYSOKYY ZAMOK in Ukrainian, 22 February 1996, p. 1, FBIS-SOV-96-042.



Undoubtedly this programme is ... correct with regard to its contents. As for Military Districts, in my opinion, they are relics of the Soviet Army; they were created with an eye toward broad-scale military operations.<sup>47</sup>

He then supported the idea of seven (later reduced to five) Operational-territorial Commands envisaged by the Bizhan-Shmarov plan. Starting from July 1996, when Lieutenant General Olexandr Kuzmuk took over the MOD, both General Bizhan and General Zatynayko have become in favour of ... only three ... Military Districts and the only difference is that this time the Districts have been actually renamed into Operational Commands. Therefore, the process made a full circle and the military leadership has ended with the same structure, Colonel General (already retired) Lopata was the strongest proponent of.<sup>48</sup>

It seems, that in Ukraine like in the Russian Federation, quoting one of the Russian generals,

deception has become an integral element of reform because it sort of compensates for its absence... Reform is increasingly covered with the dirt of immorality... Sometimes we get the impression that not staid generals are involved but children who do not know what they should do with a complex electronic toy.<sup>49</sup>

To avoid difficulties with mass media and MPs, the programme draft is (intentionally) kept classified, although it is obvious that most of the material contains no secrets. Moreover, it should be open to debate in order to gain public support and funding. As Vitaliy Karpenko, editor-in-chief of VECHIRNIY KYIV, wrote with vexation, "having power, it is much easier to remove opponents than to discuss the issues with them on an equal basis, especially if there is no reasonable argument for such a discussion."<sup>50</sup>

The Defence Ministry has declined to participate in an open debate on the programme substance and on military reform in general. If the leadership had been more receptive to experts' suggestions, many mistakes and questionable decisions would easily have been avoided.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> O. Zatynayko, 'Ukraine's Defence Capabilities Will Not Deteriorate If Military Districts Are Disbanded,' Kiev UKRAYINA MOLODA in Ukrainian, 22 March 1996, p. 1.

<sup>48</sup> In fact, even in October 1996 (according to General Hudym) the destiny of Military Districts still remained undecided. For more details see: Land Forces To Be Reorganised, Reduced, Moscow INTERFAX in English, 1420 GMT 15 October 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-201.

<sup>49</sup> Ch. Dick, *A Bear Without Claws: The Russian Army in the Nineties*, Centre for Conflict Studies of The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, Camberley (Surrey 1996).

<sup>50</sup> V. Karpenko, 'Bustle in the Defence Ministry,' Kiev VECHIRNIY KYIV in Ukrainian, 20 February 1996, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Firstly, so far only the general structure of the Armed Forces was considered as an example. If one touches upon other aspects of military reform (research, acquisition, unification of military services, MOD structure, personnel policy, etc.) a few more 'interesting' stories would be revealed to the reader. Some military leaders would never allow an open debate with the media. Neither do they wish to get involved in well-informed Parliamentary discussion or a testimony. Secondly, few non-governmental research institutions did try to open such a debate in 1996. For instance, a press conference was organised to discuss the report 'Ukrainian Armed Forces: Current State and Problems of Reforming' prepared by experts from the Ukrainian Centre for Economic and Political Research. It is worth mentioning that some of the recommendations were accepted by the state leadership, for example, this one: "Any further attempts to develop the programme based on the (already traditional) narrowly departmental approach will produce no successful result. The first step should be the creation of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Military Reform under the President of Ukraine."

### *2.1.5 Interdepartmental Co-ordination: Contour of the Procedure*

On 2 April 1996, in his Annual report to the Parliament, President Kuchma made a statement on "the practical completion of the development" of the programme and gave an assignment to conduct its economic substantiation.<sup>52</sup> Unfortunately, the happy ending was not yet in sight. It was found in a month, that the main goal – the forming of the State programme for build-up and development of the Armed Forces – had not been achieved, i.e. the national Army model had not been created yet. On 5 May 1996, President Kuchma signed the Decree 'On Creation of the State Expert Committee for Build-up and Development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and Other Armed Structures' that was an additional confirmation of this fact. Volodymyr Horbulin, Secretary of the National Security Council,<sup>53</sup> was empowered to head the Committee. According to its mission, the Committee must address, review and lead the development and further implementation of the programme on the basis of the Concept, approved earlier (6 January 1996). The Committee consists of different experts to review the MOD programme draft. To complete the programme and to co-ordinate this process with the other military structures and state institutions, they recommended the establishment of the Interdepartmental Committee on Military Reform under the leadership of the President. The implementation of the decision was postponed due to the 'fighting' around the draft Constitution (adopted on 28 June 1996) and replacement of the Defence Minister (July 1996).<sup>54</sup>

According to Volodymyr Horbulin, Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council, the fact that Lieutenant General Oleksandr Kuzmuk was appointed (as a Defence Minister) replacing civilian Minister Valeriy Shmarov, Ukraine "has not rejected the idea of civilian control."<sup>55</sup> Conducting one of his first news conferences, Minister Kuzmuk noticed his understanding of the issue: "The main objective ... is to get civilian leaders to know our problems and resolve them jointly with the military. It is our common cause – we work for the state and for the people."<sup>56</sup>

In July 1996 another step was made, when the Interdepartmental Committee was finally established. The new Defence Minister, Lieutenant General Kuzmuk – who had spent only a few days in the Cabinet of Ministers – and had not even had an opportunity to look around – was to head the Committee. This was the first mistake. The Committee, with such an important and complex objective, should have been headed by the Supreme Commander-in-

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<sup>52</sup> Ukraine: President Kuchma Delivers Annual Address to the Parliament, Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian, 1815 GMT 2 April 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-067.

<sup>53</sup> According to the Constitution of Ukraine, since 28 June 1996 – National Security and Defence Council (NSDC) of Ukraine.

<sup>54</sup> Time is a wise doctor: new Defence Minister has new vision of the Armed Forces. As a result, the new programme does not fully match the Concept approved earlier by the MOD Board, by the National Security Council and by the President.

<sup>55</sup> What Will Volodymyr Horbulin Discuss With the CIA Director? Kiev VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 17 September 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-185.

<sup>56</sup> Interview with Ukraine's new Defence Minister Oleksandr Kuzmuk : The Minister Hits the Bull's Eye, Lviv ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian, 23 July 1996, FBIS-SOV-96-148.

Chief himself. The Prime Minister and the Secretary of the National Security and Defence Council, i.e. the officials with real power at the interdepartmental level, would have been the only alternative.

On 31 August 1996, putting the President's Decree into practice, (although with a delay) Defence Minister Kuzmuk signed his Directive. It envisaged the establishment of the MOD Working Group with aiming to complete the State programme for the Armed Forces build-up and development till year 2005 and to present the final draft for the MOD Board for consideration by 25 October. Members of the Working Group were rather 'notional' – 27 high ranking (MOD and General Staff) officials – with Major General Valeriy Fomyn, First Deputy Chief of the General Staff, as Chairman. This was the second mistake. Firstly, General Fomyn had spent only couple months in the General Staff and, secondly, he had not been released from his other duties in order to focus on the programme. Needless to say, it was rather difficult for the Major General to be in charge of more than 20 Major Generals, a few Lieutenant Generals, and even some Colonel Generals in the Working Group.

In fact, it was Major General Mykola Palchuk, Chief of Operations who was supposed to co-ordinate all the activities, as well as ... continuing to carry out his exigent daily duties.<sup>57</sup> In reality, a couple of senior officers from the General Staff Main Operations Directorate were working on a daily basis 'on behalf of both the MOD Working Group and the Interdepartmental Committee (with the 'notional' membership as well).

In March 1996, General Radetsky, the MOD Inspector General (and former Defence Minister) warned: "There is nothing more dangerous today for our society than degrading the science-intensive process of the Armed Forces' reformation to the level of a commonplace departmental matter."<sup>58</sup>

His and other experts' voices had not been heard by either state, or MOD leadership, although it is so obvious that the military sphere should not be left in the hands of mere militaries. One way or another, it affects and is influenced by many other factors, such as political, economic, diplomatic, ecological, social, societal, etc. Therefore, many governmental and non-governmental institutions must be involved in the process of military reform.

Three more events appear to be important in understanding the procedure to review and approve the programme. Firstly, on 6 December 1996, the State Expert Commission gave the 'green light' for the programme draft. Secondly, on 13 December 1996, during the MOD Board meeting, the President ... sharply condemned the military leadership guilty of "the

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<sup>57</sup> General Palchuk was one of the authors of the previous draft. Having tried to justify the necessity of originally seven (and later five) Operational-territorial Commands for about a year, now he 'suddenly' becomes in favour of only three ... Operational Commands. Is this not surprising? Since neither Ukrainian military science has witnessed any breakthrough, nor there has been any serious change in the initial data, the only explanation of such a transformation is ... the appointment of a new Defence Minister. Unfortunately, the 'yes, sir' approach in many cases prevails over integrity and common sense.

<sup>58</sup> General of the Army of Ukraine V. Radetsky, 'Problems of Building the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the Context of the National Security of the State,' Kiev NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 26 March 1996, p. 1.

worst version of the imitation of work" on the programme draft. In his view, advancement on the reforms strongly depends on how objectively and seriously – "without hysterics and superfluous emotions"<sup>59</sup> – one estimates the current situation and what conclusions one draws. This is the President's sharp, but objective estimation:

In reality, there is a lot of noise at the very top, but concrete and visible results are rarely seen even through the stereoscopic telescope. It is not a work. It is the worst version of its imitation. Therefore, today we can only speak in future tense about the State programme for build-up and development of the Armed Forces. It cannot proceed this way any further. The time for persuasion, discussion and meditation is over. It is time to be personally responsible for the state of affairs.<sup>60</sup>

Thirdly, on 28 December 1996, the National Security and Defence Council headed by the President ... approved the programme. After the harsh criticism of 13 December, this sudden approval seemed rather strange, since everybody understands that two weeks are not enough to finish what has not been finished for years.<sup>61</sup> Obviously, that decision was a result of the internal political pressure on the administration and a will to show some positive results of the new Defence Minister's activity.

However, it is clear that the approved programme will not allow effective reform of the Armed Forces and can even lead to a deterioration of the current situation; mainly, because it is not based on reliable economic, political, and organisational provisions. Interestingly enough, the Defence Minister does not see any need to seek Parliament's approval of the programme.<sup>62</sup> Thus, one can witness more disagreement between the executive and the legislative branches on the issue when it comes to financing the military reform (if indeed it is envisaged at all by the authors of the programme).<sup>63</sup>

#### *2.1.6 Other Civilian Players: Degree of Involvement*

It has become obvious that the building of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, as a component of nation-building, cannot only be a military matter, but should be resolved at the state level. In

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<sup>59</sup> L. Kuchma, 'Ukraine Does Not Need Funny Armed Forces, It Needs of Full Value Army,' Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian, 17 December 1996, p. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. p. 3. Interestingly enough, literally nobody after this harsh evaluation was released from duties. The same people continue to plan reforms as they did before. The 'personal responsibility' issue still remains unsettled.

<sup>61</sup> It was finally signed by President Kuchma on 18 January 1997.

<sup>62</sup> Colonel General O. Kuzmuk, 'Destiny of the Army is Inseparable from the Destiny of the State,' Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian, 5 December 1996, p. 5. According to the Defence Minister, after the NSDC's review and approval the programme draft should be approved by the President. The Minister does not mention the Parliamentary review and approval process. Experts believe, that since the Programme for the Armed Forces build-up [presumably] defines the future of the Army up until the year 2005 and, since [presumably] it must be funded, it is the Parliament of Ukraine that according to the Law 'On Defence of Ukraine' must review and have the final word on the programme.

<sup>63</sup> It is not a joke, it is rather bitter reality. Authors of the draft believe, there is no need to ... finance the Army's reformation. Moreover, they expect that only during the first year of its implementation, the Armed Forces will save almost as much as two current defence budgets. Thus, the Army will make money instead of spending it. Sounds good, does it not? Any Parliament would be willing to approve such a 'profitable' plan.

its turn, at the state level, civilian leadership must have the required level of expertise, to undertake this task. As Gavin Kennedy puts it:

To know something about the efficiency of the defence functions we have to know more than the mere aggregate of all personnel costs, all equipment costs and all other costs ... If we know the expenditures that are supposed to be allocated to specific functions, we can at least ask elementary questions: is this defence function worth the cost; is there a better use (defence or otherwise) for these resources?<sup>64</sup>

In this sense, "a quality control is an important aspect of the programme development. It is also the final step in defence planning cycles which spawn consistently sound products. A demand thus exists for impartial inspection by a 'murder board' of objective professionals who are familiar with the full spread of opinions and qualified to pick plans apart piece by piece before they recommend that sponsors ratify, revise, or revoke."<sup>65</sup>

In June of 1996, on the request of the General Military Inspection Directorate, (under the President of Ukraine) the 'murder board' of experts was very productive. Many of its recommendations were taken into account. Unfortunately, the final version of the programme had not gone through any serious review process, although it has all the necessary signatures on it. Needless to say, the President and the members of the National Security and Defence Council are not the only representatives of the 'civilian side.' Regarding the role of other civilian players, involved in the process, it was rather insignificant. Given the lack of civilian experts, the Cabinet of Ministers invites the military professionals to maintain 'civilian' control over the military.

For example, Major General Palamarchuk is Head of the State Committee on Defence under the Prime Minister; Colonel Aparshyn is Military Advisor to the Prime Minister. Their military background helps them to keep the Government informed and to be in touch with the military leadership. On the other hand, it is this same military background that inhibits them to generate genuinely new ideas, unique approaches or to offer radical solutions. Moreover, it is not the Prime Minister, but the President, who takes the initiative and keeps under his control (through the NSDC and directly) all the activities related to the military sphere.

Many people hoped that the new members of the Parliamentary Defence and State Security Committee (elected in 1994) would undertake to properly carry out the necessary military reforms without leaving this difficult task up to the MOD Board members only. It has not happened. The role of the current Parliamentary Committee has been limited to participation of its leaders in the MOD Board meetings and the NSDC meetings to discuss military issues. Both Volodymyr Mukhyn, Chairman of the Committee, and Lieutenant General Adam Chykal, his Deputy, are more or less informed about the situation in the Army.

Unfortunately, they did not urge the Parliament to intervene in the defence planning process. They do not seem to be ready to provide the necessary political and financial guidance needed to ensure military reform in general and for the reform of the Armed Forces in particular.

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<sup>64</sup> G. Kennedy, *Defence economics* (The Gresham Press, Surrey 1983) p. 93.

<sup>65</sup> Collins, U.S. *Defence Planning*, p. 13.

They did try to call public attention to the inadequate financing of the Army, although it is simply not enough under the current circumstances. Moreover, to a certain extent, it is even dangerous if the Army gets everything its military leadership 'needs'.<sup>66</sup> It is obvious, that the method and the formal process of forming the programme have been rather chaotic. Fortunately, since May 1996, a few reasonable decisions (the State Expert Commission, the Interdepartmental Committee, the MOD Working Group) have been made and put into practice.

As regards the programme's substance – referring to open sources – neither world experience, nor own scientific ideas, unfortunately, have been used by the authors. The 'fighting' about general force structure, for example, did not even presuppose the establishment of joint commands to combine the efforts of all the military services. None of the structures in consideration (the military districts, the operational-territorial or the operational commands) is assumed to have its land, air and naval (marine) components under the single joint command. These structures are supposed to be under the Land Forces Command and will consist of pure land component. This approach, obsolete by now, has no future.

Likewise, there is no clear division of authority between the MOD and the General Staff, nor between the operational commands and the military services. It is not a matter of lack of time (or priorities); it is rather lack of understanding on how important these issues are in the context of the reform of the Armed Forces. How can one plan reforms in communications, command and control, logistics, acquisition, mobilisation, deployment and employment without clear answers to the aforementioned questions?

Despite the fact that the last version of the programme draft was approved, by the President, experts argue that there is no programme yet. Moreover, it is simply impossible to form such a programme without a clear vision of the national interests, strategic objectives, national and military security strategy; without financial and programme guidance from the civilian side; without understanding the substance of missions and tasks of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. Only a systematic approach within a single 'big picture' framework can lead to success. Otherwise, all future efforts to reform the military sphere and to establish reliable civilian control over it, are doomed to failure. Ukraine can just repeat the fruitless reform efforts it has already gone through for the last five or six years.

This analysis shows that the leadership, i.e. 'upper stratum cannot rule in the old way any longer.' The lamentable situation in the Army (see Chapter 3) shows that 'lower stratum does not want to live in the old way any longer' either. Obviously the current state of affairs cannot last forever. Given the lack of civilian experts and sharply decreasing number of military experts there is an urgent need to start (real) reforms as soon as possible. State leadership simply cannot exploit enthusiasm any longer by, producing 'meaningless piles of paper' and spreading disappointment among the people involved. Ukraine is doomed either to get a

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<sup>66</sup> Can one imagine what would have happened if the MOD had got enough money to implement its plans, for instance, in autumn of 1995 or in spring of 1996? How many (seven, five or three) and what kind (the military districts, the operational-territorial or the operational) of commands would they have created?

successful result, or to prolong current crisis into an indefinite future with quite predictably devastating consequences.

## ***2.2 Civilian Defence Minister: Unreasoned Or Premature Step?***

In 1994, there was hope that appointment of Valeriy Shmarov as a civilian Defence Minister, would provide a new state of civil-military relations in Ukraine. It turned out to be a failure. Today, Ukraine has already the fourth Defence Minister in a few years of independent development, not to mention four Chiefs of the General Staff within the same time span. Unfortunately, such political instability provokes a situation when high and middle level authorities come and go without any system, any continuity, or any sound results in the long-run. To understand why Valeriy Shmarov had not justified the hopes, let us return to the summer of 1994.

Since Defence Minister General of the Army of Ukraine, Vitaliy Radetskyy, had not been very loyal to (newly elected President) Leonid Kuchma, openly campaigning for President Kravchuk, his retirement was only a matter of time. The main question was, who would become the third Defence Minister of Ukraine. According to governmental sources,<sup>67</sup> the most probable candidates for the post were: Colonel General Volodymyr Shkydchenko, Odessa Military District Commander; Colonel General Ivan Oliynyk, Deputy Defence Minister (Hardware & Armaments); Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata, Chief of the General Staff; and Colonel General Vasyl Sobkov, Land Forces Commander. There were also rumours that Ukraine could follow Western experience and somebody in the civilian suit would take over the Ministry of Defence. These rumours proved to be correct.

### ***2.2.1 Promising Start***

In August 1994, the Ukrainian Defence Ministry was headed for the first time by a civilian. It was generally felt that the Ministry of Defence should be led by a politician with a new way of thinking in order to see the prospects of the organisational development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine under the conditions of a rule-of-law democratic state. There was no so-called 'passive resistance' by the military to civilian presence. Everyone knew that Valeriy Shmarov, whose previous career was closely connected with the military-industrial complex, was a man from the President's team. Instead there was hope for genuine reform in the Armed Forces.<sup>68</sup> Expressing the general feeling of the military servicemen, Anatoliy Smetanin wrote: "If he proves to be a man of action, his authority in the Army will be indisputable."<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Odessa Soil Is Rich in Defence Ministers, Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian 22 July 1994, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Many officers still believe it is impossible to reduce the Army as long as the military men (directly interested in keeping up personnel strength in order to justify the existence of a certain number of generals) are leaders of the MOD. In turn, civilian officials would have a vested interest in making the Defence Ministry less costly because ranks are of no interest to them and the size of their salaries does not depend on the number of personnel.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Ukrainian Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov by A. Smetanin, Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 29 October 1994, p. 3.

Minister Shmarov viewed the main reason for his appointment as an economic one: "At present, the economy is not healthy, and it has its impact on the Army. So, it was the perception (of the leadership) that the military should be headed by an individual with economic expertise who can balance the state's capabilities and the need to ensure protection of the country which prompted my appointment."<sup>70</sup> As Valeriy Shmarov pointed out, from now on the problems of the military-industrial complex and the Army, will be concentrated in the one pair of hands. It was precisely this point which was one of the conditions for his appointment to this post.<sup>71</sup> The 'industrialist' Valeriy Shmarov was perceived as a man from whom one should expect new actions.<sup>72</sup> From the very beginning, the new Minister was making quite an impression. He frequently and successfully appeared on the international arena to participate in intergovernmental negotiations, to visit military units and 'hot spots' in Yugoslavia, to give numerous interview and press conferences. Valeriy Shmarov could be easily singled out in the crowd, cultivating a new image of the 'power ministry leader.' The facade of the MOD looked very inspiring.

### 2.2.2 *Frustrated Hopes*

Unfortunately, inside the MOD and the Armed Forces little changed during the two years of Shmarov's leadership. The newly appointed civilian Defence Minister planned no special changes, concerning the development of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, because, in his view, "Ukrainian Military Doctrine is correct, and it needs no correction whatsoever."<sup>73</sup> He was repeating the same idea up to his dismissal, while simultaneously trying to develop a programme of reforms (?).

The functions and authority of the Defence Ministry and the General Staff were not divided, even on paper. It appeared ludicrous of General Lopata, but it was exactly the Chief of Staff who was asking almost every day to draw the line of responsibility. On the one hand, it seemed that Minister Shmarov had his own understanding of civil-military relations at the very top:

Indeed, the division of functions is envisaged. The General Staff is a body to draft plans; it develops a concept, a doctrine, and based on its drafts puts forward proposals regarding their resolution. My inalienable right, however, is to agree or disagree with its proposal. This right is

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> Report on Defence Minister's News Conference, Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian, 1915 GMT 26 August 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-167.

<sup>72</sup> Valeriy Shmarov was 50 years old. In 1972 he graduated from Taras Shevchenko State University, Kiev. For 20 years he had worked at Kiev Radio Factory, rising from an operator to production chief. In 1987 he became a defence factory director; in 1992 he was appointed to the post of First Deputy General Director of Ukrainian National Space Agency. In June 1993 Valeriy Shmarov became Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister; in 1994 he replaced General Radetskyy as a Defence Minister.

<sup>73</sup> Report on Defence Minister's News Conference, Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian, 1915 GMT 26 August 1994, FBIS-SOV-94-167.



even envisaged by the position description that directly specifies that the Chief of the General Staff is my First Deputy. If this is so, I am his direct chief. This is obvious.<sup>74</sup>

On the other hand, although Valeriy Shmarov was offered different schemes with various approaches to the MOD and General Staff structures and division of functions and authority between the MOD and the General Staff, none of them was accepted and put into practice. Concerning disagreements between the civilian Defence Minister and the top military officials, Valeriy Shmarov felt their presence and admitted it openly to correspondents: "Not everything that was developed by the military experts – although very talented people – over decades can now be used for the benefit of the state. But it is not so easy to reject the old, which has been tested by practice and experience. Therefore, disagreements emerge, although they are of a purely working nature."<sup>75</sup>

Rumours of his conflict with Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata were being persistently spread. Expressing his personal feeling on how his activities are supported by the entire military leadership, Minister Shmarov said:

This is a difficult question, because military people are special – they are accustomed to saying 'yes, sir,' but I cannot say what they actually think. But all of them quite explicitly express support in their words and nods. Work results of specific officials will show. I believe that support should be expected from the middle-level officers in local units whose resources and possibilities are limited, and who are hardest hit by the present situation, and need a lot of help. This support is very realistic down there. Also, the enlisted servicemen should not be neglected. I count on their support.<sup>76</sup>

Minister Shmarov had no reasonably sized staff for supervision and tolerated the very scarce civilian presence in the MOD. He had not even tried to form a team of like-minded people to ensure support for his own plan of reform: "We will not set up new directorates; civilians will simply be working in the aforementioned areas."<sup>77</sup> In reality, Valeriy Shmarov appointed as many as ... two civilians to the influential positions: Anatoliy Dovgopolyy as Deputy Defence Minister (Hardware & Armaments) and Olexandr Urban as Head of the (General Staff) Foreign Relations Department.<sup>78</sup>

Minister Shmarov produced nothing likeable to the establishment of a stable, institutionalised, sustainable system. Roaming around became sharply visible in all fields. In the final analysis, military planning, programming, budgeting and other systems are still in their embryonic stage. In February 1996 Valeriy Shmarov recognised that:

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<sup>74</sup> Interview with Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov: We Share One State and We Must Take Care of It, Kiev VSEUKRAINSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 6 December 1995, p. 8.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Interview with Ukrainian Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov by A. Smetanin, Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 29 October 1994, p. 3.

<sup>77</sup> Interview with Ukrainian Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov: I Do Not Serve But Work in the Army. I Tell All Generals This, Kiev UKRAYINA MOLODA in Ukrainian, 11 November 1994, p. 4.

<sup>78</sup> At the beginning of 1997 Olexandr Urban was replaced, so Anatoliy Dovgopolyy remains the only top-level civilian official in Ukrainian MOD.

(t)here are many problems in the Army, as never before in the past... A lack of balance between our economic capabilities and the Army's requirements is quite a serious... There is hope that all the drawbacks and lack of balance will soon be corrected.<sup>79</sup>

In fact, in 1994 he was appointed to lead the Defence Ministry with exactly the same objective "to reach a balance between the state's economic capabilities and the Army's requirements" which he only hoped to achieve, having spent 18 months in office, and in a less favourable situation than in 1994. Little changed in the life of the Armed Forces under his leadership. Admitting the fact, Kostyantyn Morozov, the first Ukrainian Defence Minister said: "There is an impression that Minister Shmarov, who was in the not so distant past an organiser of the conversion in the Armed Forces, is still giving preference to conversion over building (the Armed Forces)."<sup>80</sup>

The media published numerous allegations against Valeriy Shmarov, concerning the enterprise 'UKRINMASH,' run behind-the-scenes by him, engaged in arms trade and concerning everybody's neglect of property, military settlements and military units subject to liquidation. That property was being pilfered and plundered. There were many attempts to cause a scandal around the Defence Minister. Certain members of the Ukrainian Parliament repeatedly hinted at a 'kompromat' (discrediting facts) against Valeriy Shmarov, which they ostensibly had at their disposal.<sup>81</sup>

In his relations with the top military leadership Valeriy Shmarov tried to act not as a politician, but more as a military professional. Professional military autonomy was certainly beyond the first civilian Defence Minister. Moreover, he often quite openly showed little respect to his subordinates in general's rank. Everybody could easily get that impression during the MOD meetings and workshops, since he did not even try to hide his feelings. Feeling offended, the generals in their turn did not provide the necessary support and initiative in all the Minister's undertakings. Out of distrust to even the Chief of the General Staff – the highest ranking military professional, he never decided to transfer the operational control of the Armed Forces to Colonel General Anatoliy Lopata.

Relying on the strong personal support of President Kuchma, in February 1996, Valeriy Shmarov finally replaced Anatoliy Lopata and (even without the Parliamentary approval) got a new Chief of the General Staff – Lieutenant General Olexandr Zatynayko, who was Commander of one of the Army Corps. Nevertheless, for over six months the Defence Minister was not able to take advantage of such a favourable civil-military 'balance.'

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<sup>79</sup> I. Kovtonyuk, 'Due to the 'Conditional' Training of Ukrainian Troops, It Is Difficult To Form Even a Tank Battalion of Peacekeepers,' Kiev UKRAYINA MOLODA in Ukrainian, 16 February 1996, p. 3.

<sup>80</sup> Colonel General (Retired) K. Morozov, Explosion to Dictation, Kiev UKRAYINSKA HAZETA in Ukrainian, No. 2 (84), 18 January 1996, p. 1.

<sup>81</sup> See, for instance: G. Nikolayev, Plot Against Valeriy Shmarov? Opponents of the Civilian Defence Minister Launch an Onslaught,' Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 19 July 1995, pp. 1-3 or Report of the INTELEKT Agency: Ukraine and Weapons, Kiev MOLOD UKRAYINY in Ukrainian, 18 August 1995, FBIS-SOV-95-162.

### 2.2.3 *Belated Removal*

The lack of the personal culture appropriate for such a high position,<sup>82</sup> lack of the necessary knowledge and experience in military matters, and also his inability to find common language even with his closest entourage, resulted into serious mistakes and improper decisions. In addition, Minister Shmarov was not able to establish stable working relationship with members of the Parliamentary Defence and State Security Committee, nor with leaders of the political parties and factions in the Parliament.<sup>83</sup>

As a matter of fact, the decision to appoint a civilian to lead the MOD in 1994 was not premature, rather, the situation was extremely favourable. The decision was rather unreasoned in a sense, that not only a civilian person, but also civilian personality should have been chosen for the post. In short, the final result was predetermined by Shmarov's lack of vision, his inability to understand the substance of the mutually beneficial division of authority between the two (civilian and military) leaders, inability and even unwillingness to create a team of support in the MOD, and the last but not least – by lack of personal culture appropriate for such a high position, Valeriy Shmarov was replaced in July 1996. His removal from the post was obvious, understandable, predictable and rather belated.<sup>84</sup>

Instead of a civil-military imbalance, new military-military balance was formed at the top of the Defence Ministry. Two Lieutenant Generals – two namesakes (Olexandr Ivanovich Kuzmuk and Olexandr Ivanovich Zatynayko), both men of action, both ready to work hard, day and night, to improve the situation in the Armed Forces. However, both were lacking experience at such a high state level and thus started with a deficiency in the relay-race.

### 2.3 *Professional Army: Distant Future?*

The State programme for the build-up and development of the Armed Forces, which President Kuchma signed on 18 January 1997, envisages a correlation of about 50-50 between contract servicemen and draftees by the year 2005. One could argue that these figures have no scientific or economic substantiation, they rather reflect a wish to get rid of all the problems which resulted from the draft.

The issue of running the conscript system in Ukraine is very painful and rather complex. In response to the sharp shortfall of conscripts in 1992-1993, the period of conscription was once again raised to two years, although under public pressure and through military initiative

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<sup>82</sup> Substantiated rumours about his affection towards alcohol circulated in the Army since his very appointment.

<sup>83</sup> For more on this issue see in : Major General (Retired) V. Grechaninov, 'Who Will Protect the Minister of Defence?', Kiev REGION in Russian, 30 July 1996, p. 8.

<sup>84</sup> Looking to the future, one would say, that despite this unsuccessful attempt, the military would still welcome a civilian Defence Minister. The only requirement is his strong personality.

of April 1996, the legislator re-established a service term of eighteen months.<sup>85</sup> The following disturbing data were presented by the General Staff.<sup>86</sup>

In 1995 about 14,000 conscripts refused to join the Armed Forces and in 1996 the number reached 18,000. Existing legislation does not have provisions to bring them to trial, therefore there have been only 13 court cases so far. There are different reasons for the shortage of conscripts. Because of existing exemptions, only 20-30 % of each year group is liable for the call-up. Of those, almost one third is rejected on medical grounds. The reluctance to serve is evident and entirely understandable. There is a general feeling among the population that the military lacks prestige and that service is a waste of time. Most often quoted reasons for avoiding the draft are *dedovshchina* (recruit hazing), the hardships of military life and lack of provision for servicemen and their families in the event of injury or death.

Not only quantitative, but also qualitative measures of the conscripts are alarming. The Law 'On Universal Military Obligation and Military Service' is known to have quite a few shortcomings.<sup>87</sup> According to this law, virtually all students in higher education can postpone their military service. Thus, the Army is deprived of the better educated men that used to fill most of important positions. For the last three years a percentage of conscripts, that have a high school diploma, decreased from 87.5% in 1994 to 66.5% in 1996. Moreover, 10,266 conscripts have been already taken to court and more than 46,000 have health problems. Among those who might enter the Armed Forces in 1997 more than 27,000 do not have high school diploma and 1,577 have only elementary school level of education.<sup>88</sup>

According to former Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov, virtually only village boys are joining the Army. Ukraine has become literally the Army of "poor workers and peasants." As a result, the social composition of the military does not reflect the social composition of society as was the case during the Soviet period. The soldiers, who mostly represent the poorest stratum of Ukrainian society, have neither a will nor motivation to protect the richest stratum, whose sons of the same age instead of serving in the Army enjoy their lives and drive expensive (US \$40,000-60,000) cars.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> This was already the third change in the term of conscript military service since 1991 – a year and a half, two years, and now a year and a half again. It turned out that the previous (two years) decision was mistaken and unwarranted. Given the demographic situation, the size of the Armed Forces (370,000) and the stipulated size of other armed structures, less than a third of the draftees would be taken into the ranks if the term of service was not reduced. As one can understand, there could be numerous abuses on a local military authority level.

<sup>86</sup> V. Kovalskyy, Valentyn, 'Army Loses Combat Capability Without Patriotic Upbringing,' Kiev NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 19 February 1997, p. 1. At the same time, every year and exclusively from the Crimean city of Sevastopol, more than 150 school graduates enter Russian military academies; therefore they are 'lost' for the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

<sup>87</sup> Twenty-six additional corrections have been already prepared by the Defence Ministry. They pertain, by and large, to Article 17 (deferments from the draft).

<sup>88</sup> Kovalskyy, 'Army Loses Combat Capability..., ' NARODNA ARMIYA, p. 2.

<sup>89</sup> A few figures help to understand the difference: The state earmarks only H158 for the monthly maintenance of one compulsory service soldier, of which the latter receives H16 in cash. Only 40-60% of military uniform supplies were provided for the Army last year.

Qualitative factors and morale also greatly impair combat readiness of the Armed Forces. Unfortunately, morale and discipline are generally low. According to the statistics, for only ten months of 1996 there were 3,000 crimes in the Armed Forces.<sup>90</sup> To a certain extent, this is because the Armed Forces reflect trends within society; disillusion, despair, distrust and disrespect for any authority. As General Martyrosyan put it:

the system – based on the principle 'I am the boss, you are the fool' – relies on repressive forms of relations with subordinates rather than on behaviour norms accepted in normal societies. This system prevents a person from being himself and forces him to give up his principles.<sup>91</sup>

If order can be instilled in the Army only by dictatorial methods and threats, this will be a temporary and frail order. As Chinese say, 'one cannot stand on tiptoes very long. In the General's view, a military sub-unit based on such an order will fall apart in the very first trial.'<sup>92</sup>

The Armed Forces of Ukraine suffer from low public support, although this is quite understandable. Nobody would tolerate such a state of affairs when "every year in the Ukrainian Army (without any war) one battalion of soldiers dies, one company commits suicide, and two regiments become disabled."<sup>93</sup> As a result, the Armed Forces are caught in a vicious circle:

Low support translates into low budgets and conscription laws which exempt many of the best potential recruits. Low quality personnel and limited resources for training and modernising the forces results in poor performance. This poor performance, which might include indiscipline, abuse of soldiers, and unsafe or insanitary living or working conditions, gives the armed forces a bad name. This poor reputation leads to a further erosion in public and political support for the military.<sup>94</sup>

Some interesting ideas on how Ukraine could improve its conscript system were presented by Lieutenant General Olexandr Ihnatenko, a member of the Parliamentary Defence Committee and former Head of MOD Main Personnel Directorate. He is certain:

in the current situation it is simply impossible for Ukrainian citizens to obey the Law 'On Universal Military Obligation and Military Service in Ukraine,' even if they want to. Ukraine plans to keep the Armed Forces on 350,000 level, that means approximately 270,000 soldiers' slots. Given the population of the country that predetermines the size of the draft contingent; the 18-month term of the military service; the 'letter' of the Law 'On Alternative (non-military) Service in Ukraine' that stipulates only religious reasons for such a service, one can easily conclude that under those circumstances there will be always a substantial surplus of conscripts.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> For more data see, for instance: G. Kluchikov, 'Ukrainian Army Is Overflowed by Criminal Wave,' Kiev KIYEVSKIYE VEDOMOSTI in Russian, 27 July 1996, p. 4.

<sup>91</sup> Martyrosyan, 'What Kind of Minister...', Kiev VECHIRNIY KYIV, p. 2.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> V. Luganskiy, 'Stand up' for the Military Reform, Kiev REGION in Russian, 30 July-6 August 1996, p. 1.

<sup>94</sup> Major A. Zaccor, Problems in the Baltic Armed Forces, Conflict Studies Research Centre of The Royal Military Academy Sandhurst Camberley, Surrey, September 1994.

<sup>95</sup> Lieutenant General O. Ihnatenko, 'Everybody Must Serve In the Army,' Kiev NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 3 December 1996, p. 3.

In fact, today only 11.5% of young men become soldiers.<sup>96</sup> As a result of this imbalance, there are a lot of tricks and bribes involved in running the conscript system.<sup>97</sup> To balance the system, General Ihnatenko offers different options: first, shorter term of military service (12-month term seems to be the minimum considering the complexity of weapons and level of training required); secondly, wider eligibility criteria for alternative service; thirdly, different approaches to reserve components' manning.

General Ihnatenko's article carries a very clear title: "Everybody Must Serve In the Army." In fact, he echoes Defence Minister Kuzmuk who has told the media: "As a patriot, citizen, and serviceman, I am deeply convinced that everybody should serve in the Armed Forces."<sup>98</sup> While the generals continue to look for solutions how to involve more people in the service, there is another – more radical – solution that envisages fewer people serving in the Armed Forces. Among the possible options is one in which further promotion of the contract of service should not be excluded. Increasing the professional element in the Armed Forces could also raise the ability of the military personnel to cope with the growing complexity of the modern weapon systems.

As for the future of manpower acquisition policy, the issue of a professional Army is being widely considered by society. The experts' point of view corresponds to that of the public – 84% for professional service, 16% for preserving the draft. The point of view of almost every sixth military expert still in favour of preserving the draft says they are not reluctant to support a completely professional Armed Force, but prefer to give priority to the tackling of other problems under the heavy pressure of insufficient financing.<sup>99</sup>

Meanwhile, it seems that Ukraine is still far away from obtaining their professional Armed Forces. There are currently about 30,000 contract servicemen in the Army. As a rule, these are re-enlisted servicemen. Moreover, as it turns out, almost two thirds of all contract servicemen are ... 'servicewomen.' Men are not coming in under contract because little pay and the appropriate conditions are lacking.

One may certainly say, that service under contract is not yet justifying itself in Ukraine. The subject being raised in some cases is that it is not worth increasing the number of contract soldiers. For what purpose? For the tank commander, gunner and driver to be professionals.

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<sup>96</sup> In 1994-1995 the percentage was even lower. The former Defence Minister Valeriy Shmarov was quite indignant about these numbers: 'There is the Law 'On Universal Military Obligation and Military Service in Ukraine.' This is a paradox. Is it really universal if only 10% of young men of draft age join the Army? We need the Law simply 'On Military Service in Ukraine.'

<sup>97</sup> The Government tries to impose different restrictive regulations. For instance, to strengthen responsibility of the local medical commissions, representatives from the Procurator's office and from the Security Service have taken part in their work since 1996. As a result, the number of 'ill' draftees declined in 1996 compared to 1995. Despite the reports of 'success,' these measures are rather short-term solutions.

<sup>98</sup> O. Vaulina, 'By Reducing Our Ranks, We Are Mobilising!,' ZERKALO NEDELI in Russian, 26 October-1 November 1996, p. 4.

<sup>99</sup> Problems of the Armed Forces and the Military-Industrial Complex of Ukraine and Civilian Control over Their Activities, Report of Ukrainian Centre for Peace, Conversion and Conflict Resolution Studies (Kiev 1996).

They would serve longer and would take care of the hardware and weaponry. But that is not what has happened. The costs are higher than the gains and the turnover of the contract personnel is very high therein. The MOD takes in as many people under contract over a year as it discharges.

Opponents of the professional Army argue about the better quality of the reserve formations once the conscript system is in place. However, the Ministry of Defence gives quite opposite data:

The reserve formations of Ukrainian Armed Forces are manned at 68.5% with category one (reserve) servicemen, and 31.5% with category two and three servicemen. The divisions are only 21% manned with category one servicemen who completed their conscript service less than 13-15 years ago.<sup>100</sup>

That is to say, taking into account the cutbacks in the Army, the quality of manpower acquisition declines while the average age of the military reservists sharply increases in Ukraine.

A trend towards an expansion of contract service is not expected in the near future. Lack of finances prevents the MOD from increasing the number of contract servicemen. It makes no sense to serve in the Army for the same wage as an unskilled worker. Major General Vitaliy Kuksenko, Chief of the Main Organisational-Mobilisation Directorate and Deputy Chief of the General Staff, believes:

economics, and not our desires and emotions, are in charge of this process. The state does not have the capability of paying a decent wage, so no one is going for the contracts. The economic situation does not permit the development of army professionalism in the way that was expected.<sup>101</sup>

It is worth reminding the reader, that the State programme for build-up and development of the Armed Forces of Ukraine till the year 2005 provides for a 50-50 correlation between contract servicemen and draftees. On the scale of History the year 2005 is in the not too distant future.

## Conclusions

1. Despite some real changes for the last 5-6 years, civil-military relations are still far from optimal in Ukraine. It seems, that facing the whole spectrum of other urgent and complex problems, civilian leadership of the country is not ready and therefore does not fully accept democratic civilian control over its military.

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<sup>100</sup> Lieutenant General O. Ihnatenko, 'How To Meet Mobilisation Requirements: Some Views on the Issues of Manpower Acquisition for the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Training of Militarily Trained Reserves,' Kiev NARODNA ARMIYA in Ukrainian, 5 April 1996, p. 2. Methods available make it possible also to determine the level of proficiency of the reserve personnel of various countries, including the ones with professional armies. The level of training of Ukrainian reservists is at 0.23 of the level of training of US Army reserve component, 0.29 of the level of training of German territorial troops' personnel, and 0.33 of the level of training of British reservists.

<sup>101</sup> Major General V. Kuksenko, 'A Reduction in the Term of Service Is a Step in the Reform of Our Army,' Lviv ARMIYA UKRAYINY in Ukrainian, 26 April 1996, p. 2.

2. Gaps in legislative basis, absence of clear priorities in domestic and foreign policy, zigzag efforts in reforming the Army, permanent political turbulence gives the military an opportunity to manoeuvre between the Parliament and the executive structures.
3. The programme for the Armed Forces build-up and development has become kind of test of maturity of civil-military relations in Ukraine. Numerous efforts to form the programme without the national and military security strategy; without financial and programme guidance from the civilian side; without understanding the substance of missions and tasks of the Ukrainian Armed Forces have proved to be useless in the final analysis.
4. The dimensional aspect of Ukraine's military structure seems to be unique and very important. Ukraine has almost a million of armed people and only about 370,000 of them serve in the Armed Forces. The other military structures – the National Guard, the Border Troops, the Civil Defence formations, the Security Service, the Interior Troops, and so forth – have missions and tasks that overlap with those of the Armed Forces. It is obvious, that under the pressure of limited resources one cannot reform the Armed Forces without redistribution of missions and tasks among other aforementioned structures of the State military organisation of Ukraine.
5. Although Ukraine for the last 5-6 years has succeeded in making of many constitutional and institutional arrangements for democratic civilian control over the Armed Forces, these arrangements present rather form in itself. The next step must be filling the form with an appropriate substance. One can do it only by applying a scientific (or at least systematic) approach. Therefore, it is of great importance for Ukraine to develop a methodology (whenever possible up to the checklist level) for the reforming of its Armed Forces and establishing of reliable democratic civilian control over the military sphere.





**Anatoliy S. Grytsenko**

## **Defence Reform in Ukraine: Chronology of the First Five Years**

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### **Summary**

#### *Introductory Remarks*

As an active participant in the 'Partnership for Peace' programme, Ukraine has committed itself to a 'transparency' in some key areas of civil-military relations and defence. However, the country has little valuable information to share among the partners, because its military planning, programming and budgeting systems are still in their embryonic stage. Moreover, the civilian leadership of Ukraine is not ready and therefore does not fully accept democratic civilian control over military. This study is devoted to analysing of different aspects of civil-military relations and defence reform in Ukraine. The study reveals a very important dimensional aspect of civil-military relations in Ukraine: existing in parallel to the Armed Forces a few other armed structures create many additional obstacles on the path of establishing an affordable and sustainable military structure. The paper contains vast factual material that helps to follow the development of events between 1991 and 1996. Analysis of the material allows to single out some trends, tendencies, and contradictions, invisible at first sight. The role of the key players and personalities, involved in the defence planning process, is being revealed. The research is based on a number of official references and numerous Ukrainian, Russian, and Western original sources.

#### *Findings*

1. Relationships along the civilian-military axis are still far from optimal in Ukraine. In reality, civilian leadership is not ready and therefore does not fully accept democratic civilian control.
2. Lack of constitutional clarity, absence of certain priorities in domestic and foreign policy and numerous gaps in the legislative base, create a space for manoeuvre for the military between the executive structures and the Parliament.
3. The programme for the Armed Forces build-up and development has become the focus of civil-military relations in Ukraine. It is impossible to form the programme without the national and military security strategy; without financial and programme guidance from the civilian side; without understanding the substance of missions and tasks of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

4. The dimensional aspect of Ukraine's military structure seems to be extremely important. Ukraine is in a much more difficult situation than other European countries are. It has almost a million of armed people and only about 370,000 of them serve in the Armed Forces. The other military structures – the National Guard, the Border Troops, the Civil Defence formations, the Security Service, the Interior Troops, and so forth – have missions and tasks that overlap with those of the Armed Forces. It is unwise to reform only the Armed Forces without some redistribution of missions and tasks and without optimising the whole State military organisation of Ukraine.
5. Although for the last 5-6 years most of the necessary constitutional and institutional arrangements for democratic civilian control over the Armed Forces have been completed in Ukraine, they currently present form in itself. There is an urgent need to fill the form with appropriate substance or, in other words, to 'inhale life' in it. Only then one could expect that in the years ahead Ukraine will be able to establish and run a workable and sustainable system of reliable democratic civilian control over the military.
6. One can fill the form of civil-military relations with substance only by applying a scientific (or at least systematic) approach to building the system. Therefore, it is of paramount importance for Ukraine to develop a methodology (whenever possible up to the checklist level) for the reforming of the Armed Forces and the establishing of reliable democratic civilian control over the military.